



Memorandum

TO: PARKS & RECREATION
COMMISSION

FROM: Yves Zsuttu

**SUBJECT: THREE CREEKS TRAIL
MASTER PLAN**

DATE: 09-15-2014

Approved

Date

COUNCIL DISTRICT: 6

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Commission accept the master plan for the Three Creeks Trail (western alignment) from Lonus Street to the future Guadalupe River Trail and recommend City Council approval of the Master Plan.

OUTCOME

Approval of the Three Creeks Trail Master Plan will support the future design and construction of the western reach of the trail system, from Lonus Street to the future Guadalupe River Trail. The plan guides this work in a manner consistent with community input secured at several workshops and outreach to community organizations.

Linkage of the Three Creeks Trail to other regional trail systems is to occur at a future date and is independent of this master plan. The Los Gatos Creek Trail connection is dependent upon an on-going EIR and the Guadalupe River Trail connection is dependent upon planned flood control improvements to be built by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

The subject master plan for the western alignment does not guide or limit development of the eastern alignment (future Guadalupe River Trail to Coyote Creek Trail). Efforts to acquire land in support of that reach of the trail system are on-going.

BACKGROUND

The Three Creeks Trail (western alignment) travels through the Willow Glen Area of San José. For context, the entire Three Creeks Trail is proposed to extend from Lonus Street (near Los Gatos Creek Trail), link to the future Guadalupe River Trail, link to the existing Highway 87

Bikeway, and extend to Coyote Creek Trail (within Kelley Park). The entire trail system alignment is indicated by maps found on the trail system's web page.

The trail system was identified in the City's *Greenprint for Parks and Community Facilities and Programs (Greenprint)* in September 2000 and continues to be referenced in the Greenprint's 2009 update. The City's General Plan (Envision 2040) recognizes the trail system as part of the City's 100-mile interconnected trail network and generally defines an alignment through this area of the City.

Interim public access is currently permitted along corridor properties between Lonus Street and Minnesota Avenue. An existing paved portion of the trail system extends from Minnesota Avenue to near the Guadalupe River and was developed several years ago as part of a residential development project.

The Three Creeks Trail name is a working title. The trail system was previously referred to as the Willow Glen Spur Trail. In January 2010, the Rules Committee altered the name in order to use that reference in the 2009 Greenprint update. The name change was intended to reinforce the trail's potential in linking several trail systems. Future changes to the trail name would be community-initiated and follow City Council Policy 7-5, Naming of City-owned Land and Facilities.

The City Council has taken actions in the past that focus on three objectives:

1. Seek grant and other resources to pursue acquisition of land and trail development.
2. Acquire properties, between Lonus Street and Minnesota Avenue.
3. Develop the master plan for the western alignment.

Funds have been secured and used for the successful acquisition of properties along the railway corridor between Lonus Street and Minnesota Avenue. The land along this reach was successfully acquired in December 2011.

Concurrent with the master planning process, the City has prepared plans for a pedestrian bridge to replace the existing railway trestle structure over Los Gatos Creek. In July, the Superior Court directed the City to prepare an environmental impact report to study the trestle and determine if it merits historic designation. The City is in the process of preparing the report and taking all actions required to comply with the court order. The outcome of that report does not impact the trail alignment as defined by the Three Creeks Master Plan and does not prevent the Parks and Recreation Commission or City Council from taking action on the master plan.

ANALYSIS

A master plan meets a wide variety of purposes. A master plan is developed with community input and provides design guidance that reflects agency and community goals and desires. A master plan also documents future permitting requirements, provides a conceptual cost estimate,

includes the required California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation, and ensures that the project can be developed in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. A master plan outlines a project in sufficient detail to guide and budget for future design work, and serves as collateral for competitive grant writing or prioritization as part of the City's budget process.

The draft master plan, community outreach materials, maps and associated documents are posted on the Three Creeks Trail system web page: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2883>

The Three Creeks Trail master plan identified six (6) primary goals and objectives as determined through the community process:

1. **General:** Support pedestrian and bicycle travel for recreation and commuting, minimize maintenance, create a visually-unified design, serve all ages, and consider and balance public input.
2. **Environmental Resources:** Avoid removal of existing trees, seek to use California-native and drought-tolerant plant species, and reduce water consumption.
3. **Circulation:** Enhance access to nearby destinations, provide sufficient width for multiple users and types of users, and maximize visibility along the trail and at the at-grade crossings.
4. **Education:** Direct trail users to nearby points of interest, work with community historians to explore the corridor's relevance and impact, include interpretive stations for story telling.
5. **Land Use:** Set back landscaping to permit future private gate access by residents whose homes back onto the trail.
6. **Aesthetic:** Provide a high quality and sophisticated design, incorporate railroad and agricultural themes.

The community outreach process included three well-attended community workshops (March 19, May 29, and July 24, 2014). There were between 60 and 80 attendees at the Willow Glen Community Center. The meetings occurred in a sequential fashion so that the project team and community could work through three planning steps; 1) gather data, 2) consider options, and 3) confirm a plan. Notification was sent to residents, businesses and property owners within 3/4-mile of the project corridor. Supplemental outreach occurred via notification on Twitter (#SanJoseTrails) and email notifications were sent to community groups like Save Our Trails, Willow Glen Neighborhood Association and the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition. Emails encouraged representatives of the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and the County of Santa Clara to attend the workshops.

Three additional meetings occurred for focused discussion on the pedestrian bridge project that was not part of the Master Plan, but was of related interest to the community. As noted, an EIR is being prepared for this aspect of the trail system and the master plan is not dependent upon the findings of that report, nor does the master plan guide any work on the existing trestle structure.

Further outreach occurred as staff met with the Santa Clara County Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and the Santa Clara Valley Water District to review and secure input on a proposed palette of California-native and drought-tolerant plants for future landscaping.

Through the three workshops, the City obtained over 270 comments from the community. The comments generally fell within five themes; 1) trail design, 2) trail alignment, 3) intersection design, 4) gateways, and 5) site amenities. The majority of comments were incorporated in the conceptual alignment described by the master plan in graphic and written form. A few comments were deferred because they were best addressed as part of future design work or not included because they were determined to be contrary to City policy or practice. The entire list of comments is included as an addendum to the master plan. In summary:

- 67% of comments were incorporated as part of the master plan.
- 9% will be considered during the design stage and/or subject to Department of Transportation as make improvements to related roadways.
- 24% of comments were not incorporated because of technical, policy or other challenges.

The master plan provides a detailed picture of the future trail alignment. In brief, the project will include the following elements:

- Trail: 12' wide trail constructed of asphalt concrete pavement, with gravel shoulders (2' and 5' wide) to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrian users.
- Gateways: Architectural gateways are planned for all roadway entries. These gateways will vary in style and are themed and scaled for each intersection. The gateway options include fencing inspired by truss-like construction, crate-like structures inspired by cannery shipping containers, and water tanks inspired by the nearby Del Monte water tank found along the Los Gatos Creek Trail (north of Auzerais Avenue). Multi-colored concrete will define these points of entry.
- Seating: Custom benches will assume a truss-like form, with wooden seating surface used in highly visible areas. Commercially-available seating will supplement and suggest furnishings common to railway stations.
- Interpretive Stations: Each installation will include a colorful board with text and photos to educate about topics recommended by the community. The interpretive panels will discuss agricultural history, canneries and dairy, railroad impact and legacy, railroad alignment, history of Willow Glen, natural history, and the fruit processing industry.
- Play Spaces: Paved surface games (*word jumble* and *hopscotch* as possible games), defined play areas for children and adult fitness stations will occur along the trail.
- Park Space: A well-equipped playground is planned for the southern Bird Avenue gateway and includes elements for young children and youth. The play equipment is to be inspired by the area's history, with elements recalling the picking, cleaning, processing, canning and shipping of orchard crops. A drinking fountain will be located at the park.
- Quiet Space: A plaza will serve as an additional gateway at Delmas Avenue and Milton Avenue, and include seating and a large tiled surface that replicates one of San Jose's historic canning labels. Seating areas elsewhere along the trail will be set back from the trail in order to effectively separate active and passive enjoyment of the trail.

The City has submitted a grant application to the State of California as part of the Urban Greening Grant program. Staff has received notification that the \$1,000,000 award is to be granted to the City to support design and construction per the subject master plan.

CEQA

CEQA: PP14-012 (Pending).



Yves Zsutty
Trail Network Manager
Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services

The Master Plan document is posted on the Three Creeks Trail web page:
<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2883>

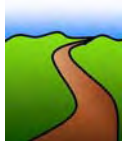
For questions, please contact Yves Zsutty, Trail Network Manager, Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services, at (408) 793-5561 or yves.zsutty@sanjoseca.gov.



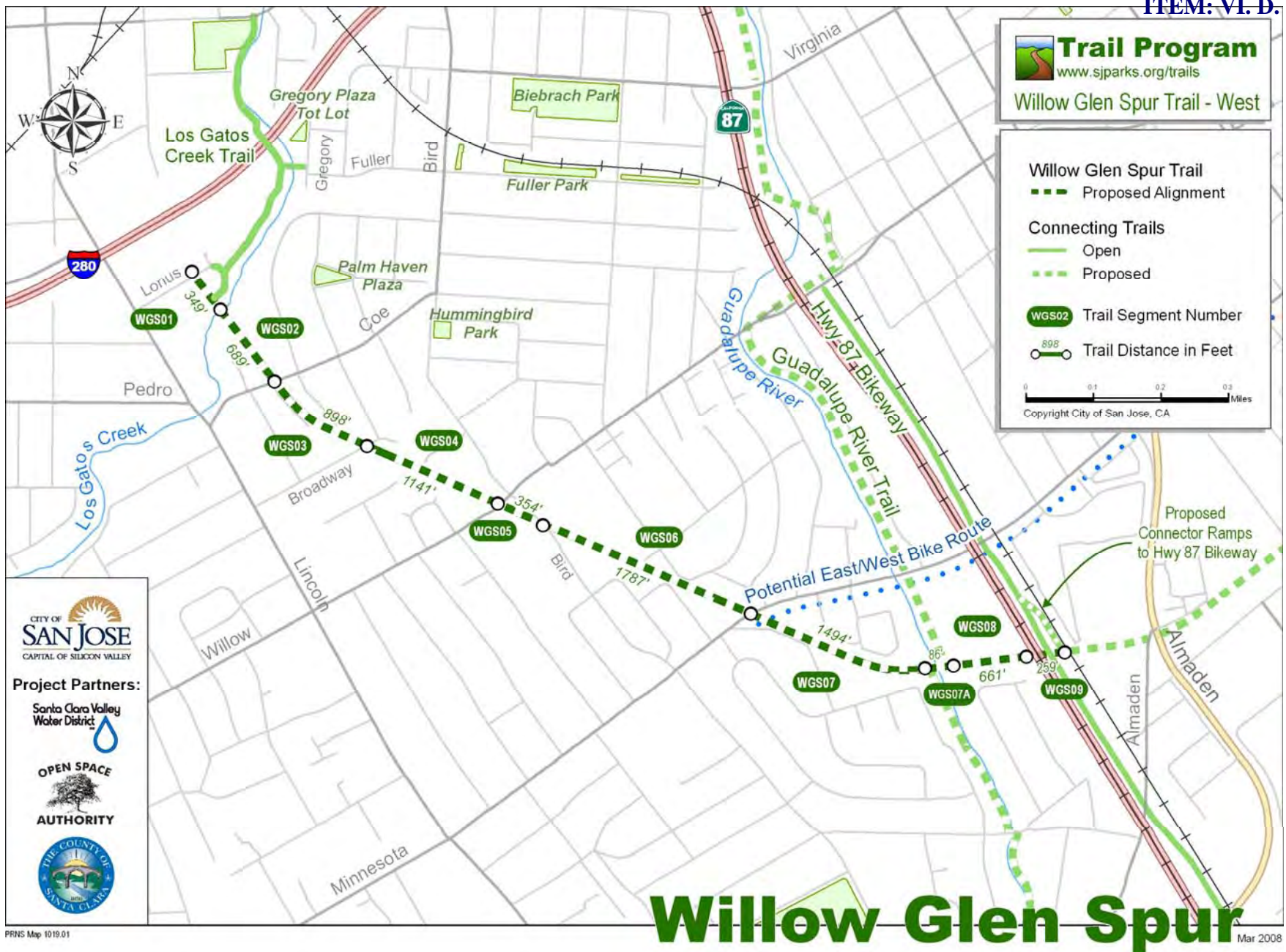
MASTER PLAN: Three Creeks Trail

(western alignment: Lonus Street/Los Gatos Creek to Guadalupe River)

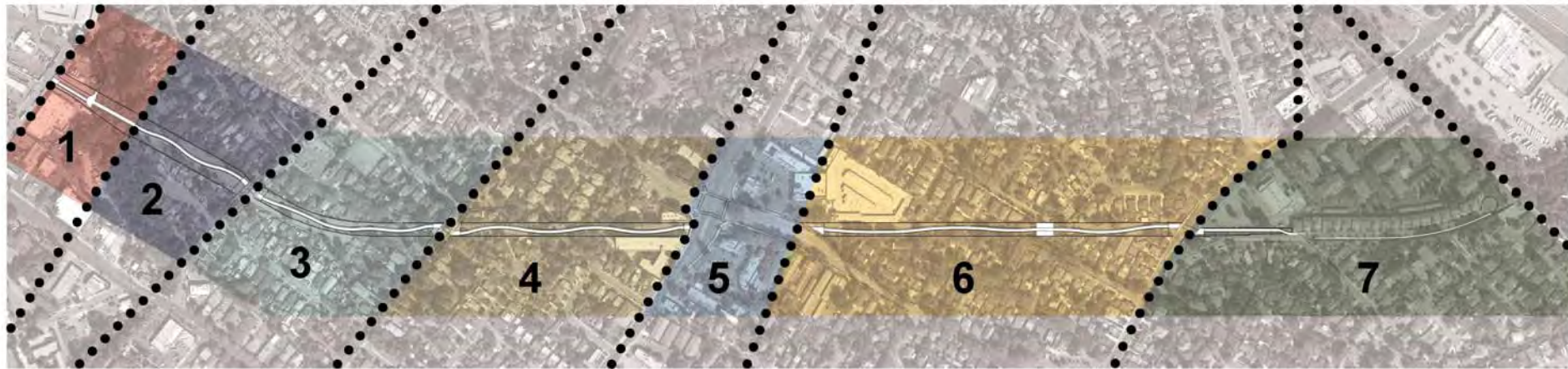
Parks and Recreation Commission - October 2014







Trail Reaches 1 - 7



REACH	
1	Lonus Street to Los Gatos Creek
2	Los Gatos Creek to Coe Avenue
3	Coe Avenue to Broadway Avenue

4	Broadway Avenue to Willow Street
5	Intersection at Willow Street and Bird Avenue
6	Bird Avenue to Minnesota Avenue
7	Minnesota Ave to Guadalupe River



Goals & Objectives

- **General** (ped/bike travel, low maintenance, serve all)



Community Outreach



Notification

- Mailer (3/4-mile from corridor)
- Stakeholder groups and agencies
- Twitter #SanJoseTrails
- Website postings

- 270 comments
 - 67% - Incorporated
 - 9% - Referred to other projects
 - 24% - Not incorporated

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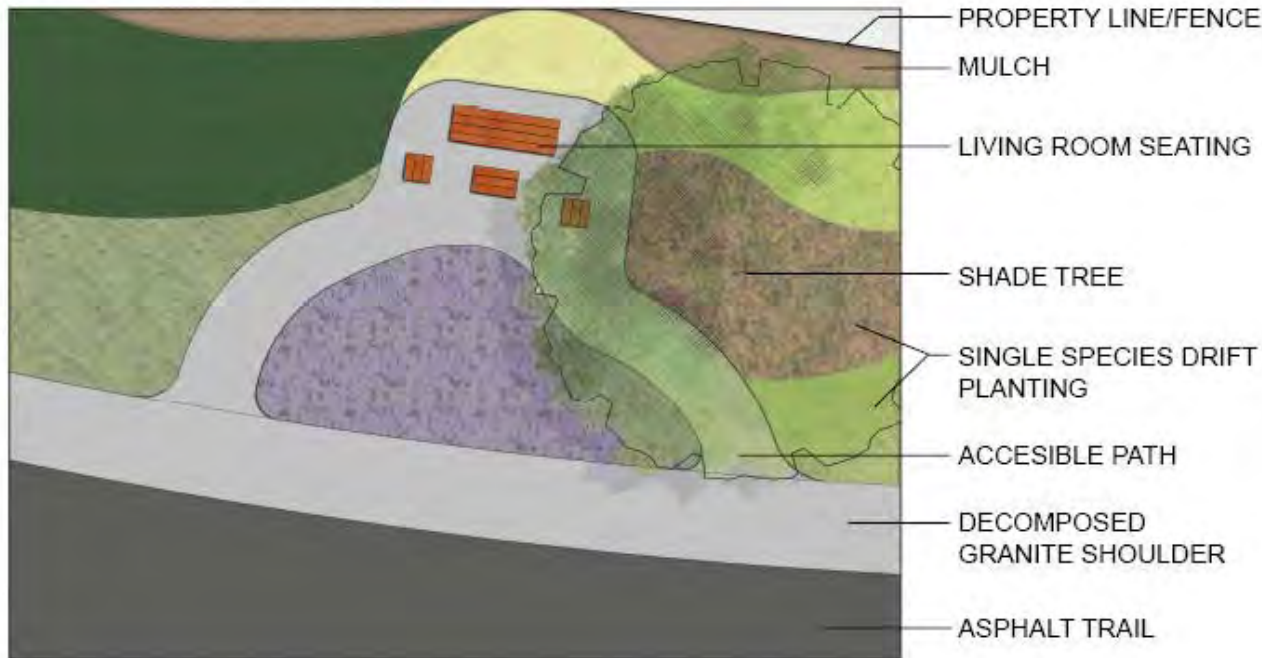


General: Multi-Use

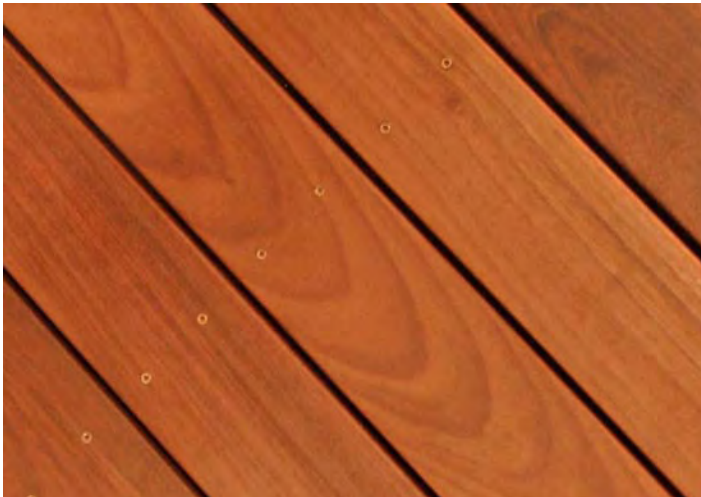


Active and Quiet Spaces

TYPICAL GARDEN/SEATING AREA



Seating for passive use



Adult Play / Exercise



Children's Play / Exercise



Heart's Delight Playground



Heart's Delight Playground

FRUIT THEMED
WALL MURAL



FRUIT/TRAIN THEMED
RESILIENT MATTING INLAY



STACKED CRATE MAZE
"PACKAGING THE FRUIT"



SPINNER
'FRUIT BASKETS'



ROLLER SLIDE
"FRUIT PROCESSING"



TRAIN PLAY STRUCTURE
'TRANSPORTING THE FRUIT'



LANDSCAPE CLIMBER
"FRUIT PEEL"



TWISTERS
'FRUIT TREE SAPPING'



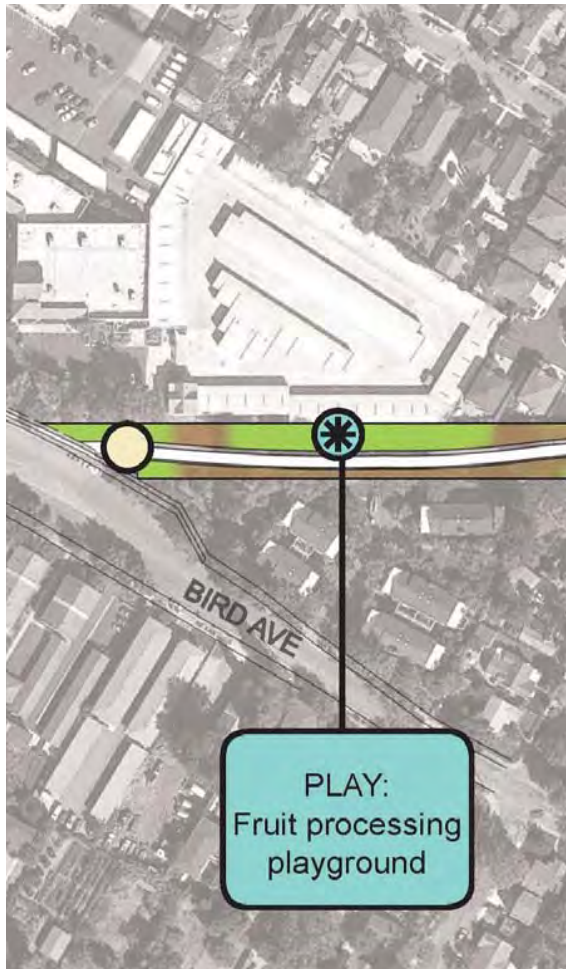
TREE SWINGS
"PICKING THE FRUIT"



LIFE SIZE FRUIT
INTERACTIVE
SCULPTURE



Heart's Delight Playground



Land Use

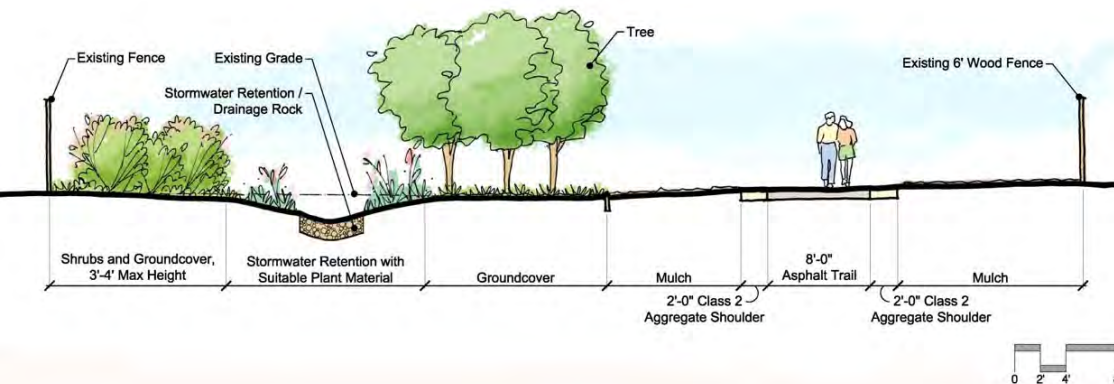


Private gates leading to trail

As trails develop, people seek direct and private access

Albertson Parkway, San Jose, California

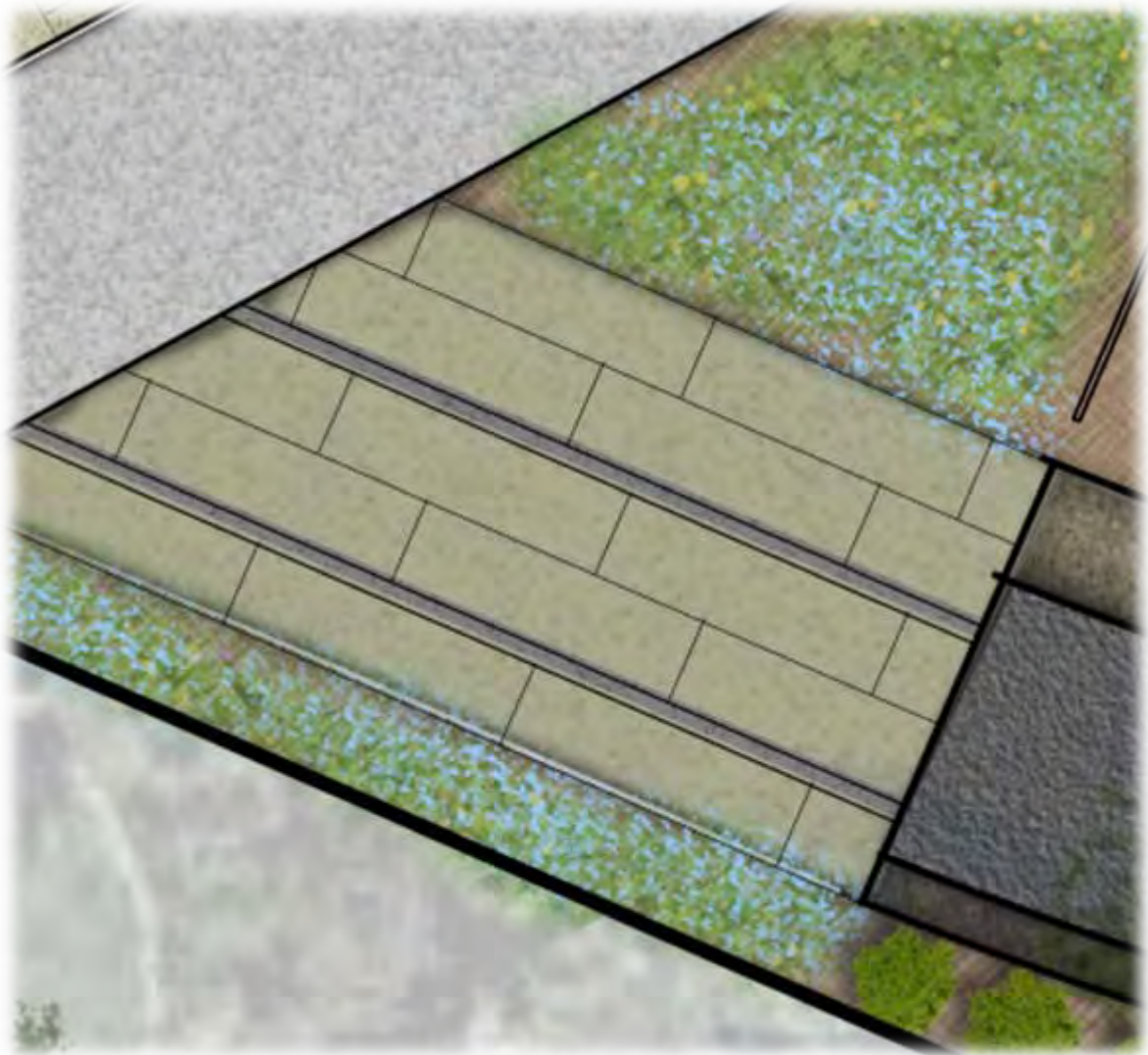
Sundav, June 7, 2009



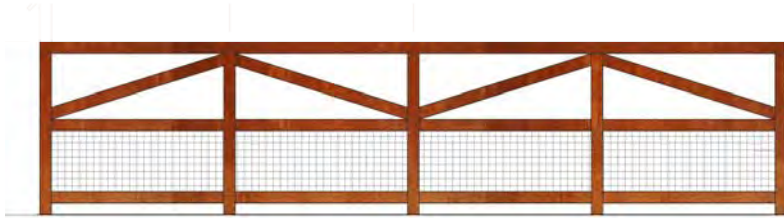
Circulation



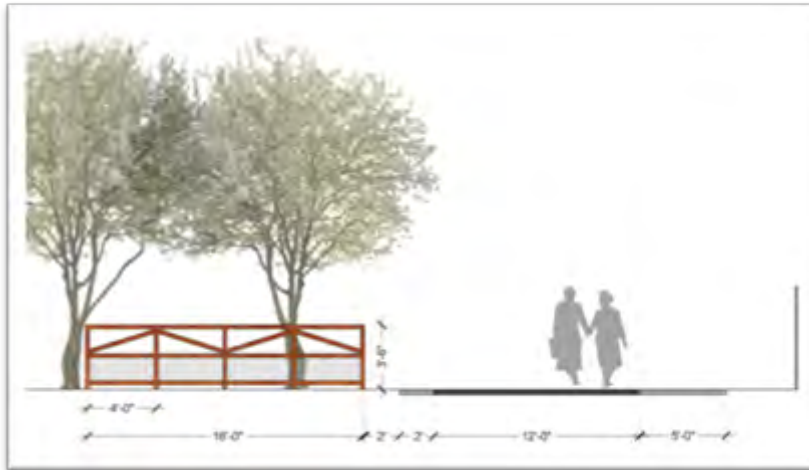
Aesthetic: Gateways / Plazas



Gateways: Truss Fence



Custom Truss Fence





Gateways: Fruit Crates



Gateways: Fruit Crates





Gateways: Water Tower

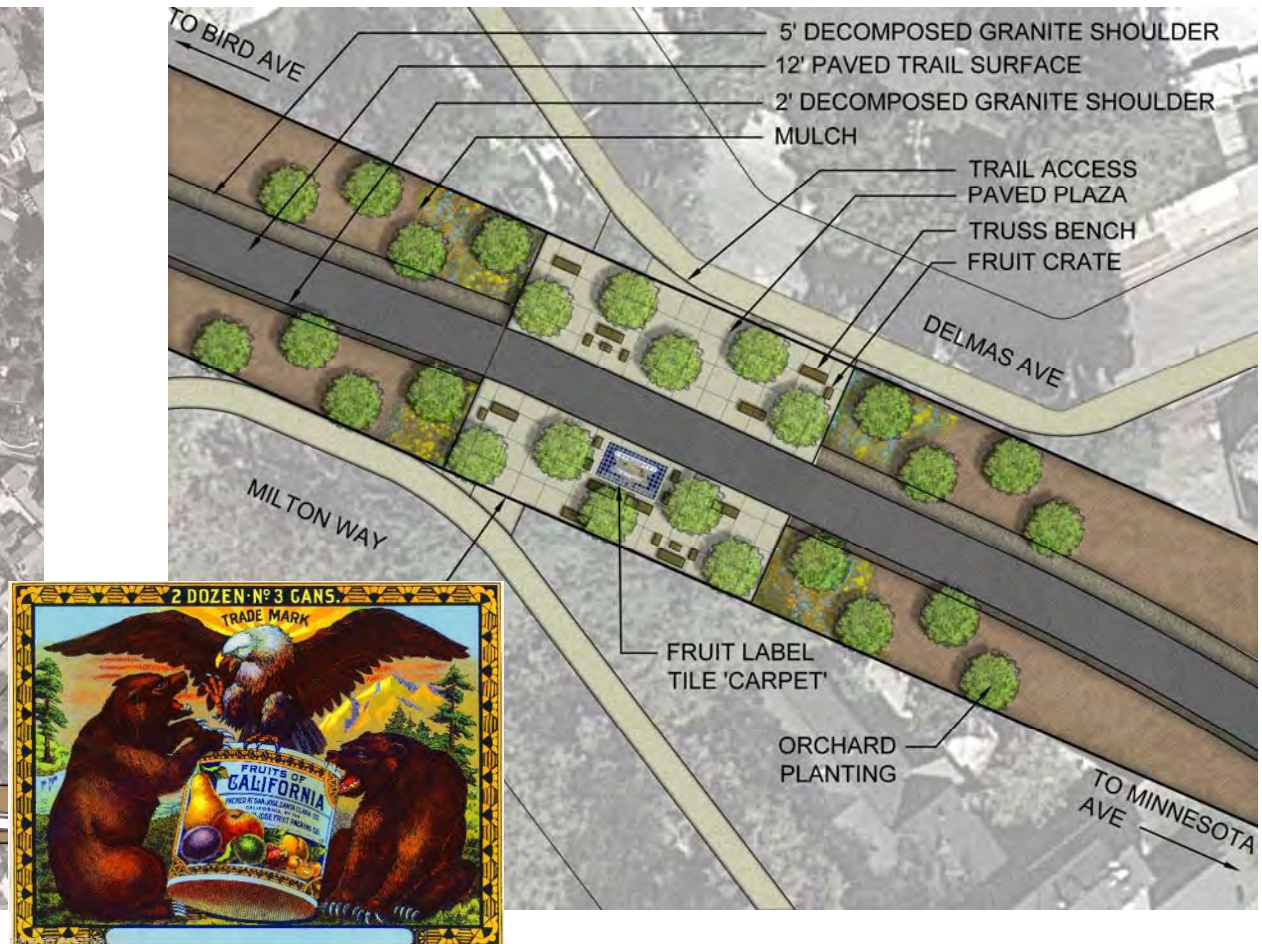


Gateways: Milton / Delmas Plaza



Arabiaranta, Finland

Gateways: Delmas Ave and Milton Way Plaza



Environmental Resources

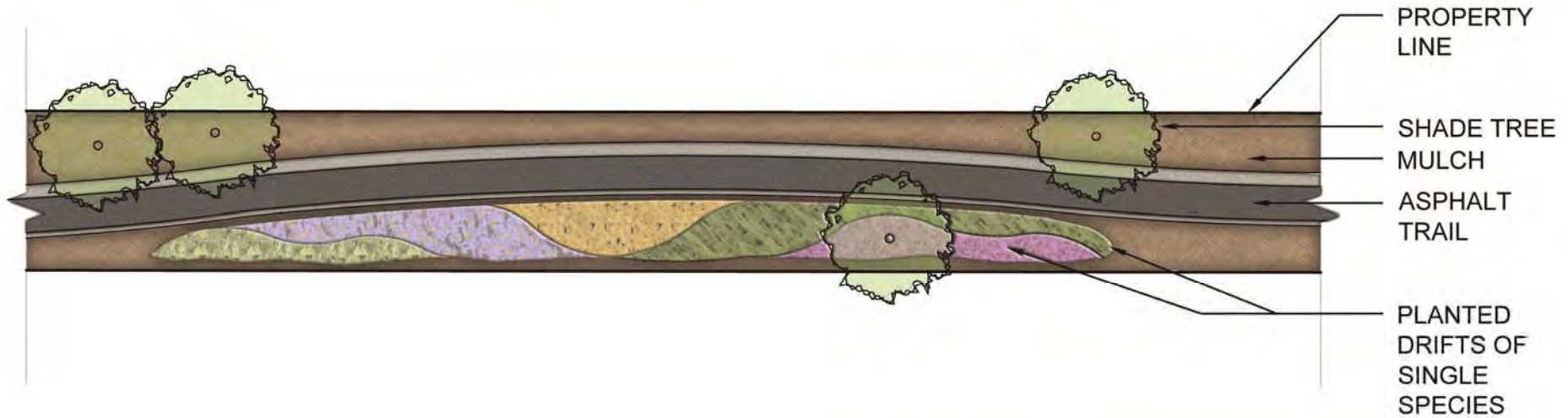


Low shrubs and groundcovers for visibility



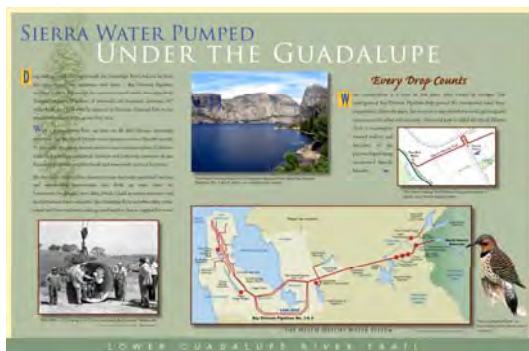
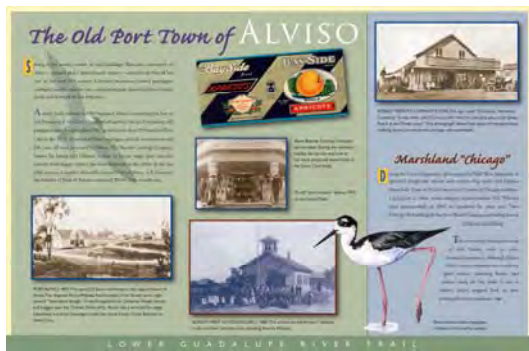
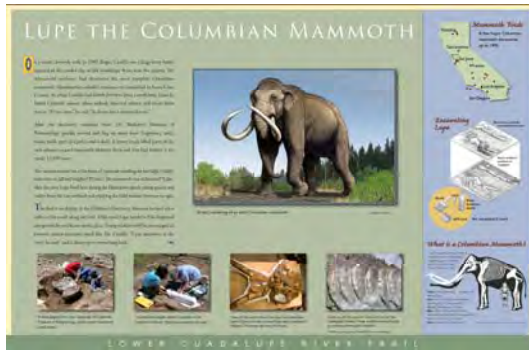
Orchard-like plantings

Planting: Gardens



Education

- Agricultural History
- Canneries and Dairy
- Railroad Impact and Legacy
- Railroad alignment
- History of Willow Glen
- Natural History
- Fruit Processing in Willow Glen



Three Creeks Trail Master Plan

Special thanks to:

- Residents of Willow Glen and San José
- Willow Glen's historians
- City of San Jose – Council District 6
- Santa Clara County Open Space Authority
- County of Santa Clara
- Santa Clara Valley Water District
- State of California
- Save Our Trails / Friends of Three Creeks Trail
- Willow Glen Neighborhood Association
- Project Team; City staff and RHAA staff

Questions?

